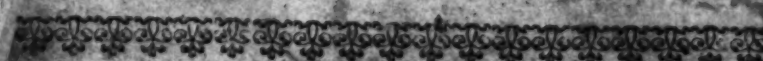


Mr. GAY'S
S E R M O N
AT THE
ORDINATION

Of the Reverend

Mr. *Mayhew.*





*The Alienation of Affections from Ministers
consider'd, and improv'd.*

A
S E R M O N
Preach'd at the
O R D I N A T I O N

Of the Reverend

Mr *Jonathan Mayhew*

To the Pastoral Care of the *West-Church*
in BOSTON, *June 17. 1747.*

By *Ebenezer Gay*, A. M.

Pastor of the first Church in Hingham.

Deut. xii. 19. *Take heed unto thy self, that thou forsake not the
Levite, as long as he is with thee on the Earth.*

Gal. i. 6. *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that
called you to the GRACE OF CHRIST.*

B O S T O N : N. E.

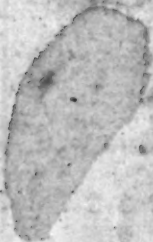
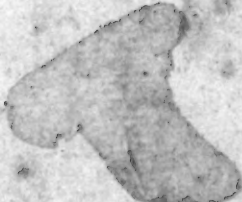
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Ordination - SERMON.

GALATIANS IV. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Ye know how through Infirmary of the Flesh, I preached the Gospel unto you at the first. And my Temptation, which was in my Flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an Angel of GOD, even as CHRIST JESUS. Where is then the Blessedness you spake of? For I bear you Record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own Eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your Enemy, because I tell you the Truth?

HOW beautiful are the Feet of him that bringeth good Tidings, that publisheth the Gospel of Peace! And, how happy the People to whom he is welcome, and by whom he is entertained as GOD's *Messenger*, and their Soul's *Friend*! 'Tis Pity this Blessedness should be only in Appearance, and of short Continuance: And that the Preacher, who is at first received with all the Demonstrations of reverent and affectionate Esteem, should afterwards be rejected with the Scorn and Hatred
Men

St. Paul, at his first coming among the *Galatians*, and preaching the Gospel to them, was very highly esteemed and loved by them. They received him as an *Angel* of GOD—as the LORD's Messenger to them; even as CHRIST JESUS, for whom he was an Ambassador, representing his Person, and acting in his Stead. They treated him with all proper Marks of extraordinary Respect: accounted it, and often spake of it, as their special Felicity, to have the Gospel preached to them by so excellent, able, and faithful a Minister of it; and were ready to do, or part with, any Thing, for his Sake. Had it been possible to help him thereby, they would have plucked out their own Eyes, and given them to him. But alas! they were soon removed, separated in Affection from him, that called them into the Grace of CHRIST. Whereupon he thus expostulated with them, *Where is then the Blessedness that ye spake of?* Is all your boasted Happiness in me, as your Apostle, now at an end? *Am I therefore become your Enemy, because I tell you the Truth?* Am I indeed, as you take me to be, your Enemy, meaning you Mischief, and hurting your Souls, because I have preached, and still persist to declare unto you the Truth?

And if from such an One as Paul, the warm Affections of the *Galatians* were so alienated, it is the less to be wonder'd at, that there should be in all Ages since, as we see in the present, many Instances of the like Nature; which may nevertheless lead us to inquire,

Whence it is, or, how it comes to pass,
That the ardent Affections of People to their Ministers
are

are apt soon to cool ; yea, oftentimes to be wholly alienated from them ?

1. *Through Infirmary of the Flesh*, Ministers preach the Gospel : And this may occasion an Alienation of People's Affections from them. *Ye know how through Infirmary of the Flesh, I preached the Gospel unto you at the first. And my Temptation which was in my Flesh, ye despised not, nor rejected.* At the first they did not, but afterwards (it seems) they did, take Offence at it, and despise, and reject him for it.

The Infirmary of the Flesh, may denote the Weakness of human Nature ; the Imperfection that attended *Paul*, and is to be found in every one that preacheth the Gospel in this frail and mortal State. 1 Cor. ii. 3. *I was with you in Weakness.* Notwithstanding the high Station, and dignifying Character of the Ministers of CHRIST, yet are they weak Creatures, as justly, if not by Way of Contempt, as vulgarly so termed. Though they are *Angels* by Office, yet do they not excel in Strength like those which are so by Nature : But are Men of like Passions with others — Compassed with *Infirmary* ; as every *High-Priest*, taken from among Men, was, under the Law. God hath consulted, not only his own Glory, but also the Peoples Advantage, in putting the Treasure of the Gospel into earthen Vessels, and speaking to them by Men, like themselves, formed out of the Clay. Yet, for this natural *Infirmary of the Flesh*, thro' which Ministers preach, they are sometimes despised and rejected. It proves a Temptation unto People, to think meanly of them, and an Occasion of their Disrespect and Disgust at them. For they are apt to look for *Angelical* Perfection in their Ministers, not willing to make them the common Allowances, that are due to the Frailty of human Nature : and would have them be so spiritual, and live so by Faith, as not to care for the Things of this Life :
and

and to sow unto them spiritual Things, and not reap their carnal Things.

By Infirmary of the Flesh, the Apostle may intend some personal Imperfection, bodily Defect, or accidental Weakness, attending him. There is a Tradition, that *Paul* (according to the Signification of his Name) was a little Man of low Stature: that his Body was crooked, his Voice small, and not very pleasant. And for such Infirmary of the Flesh, he might be unreasonably despised by some. 2 Cor. x. 10. *For his Letters (say they) are weighty and powerful, but his bodily Presence is weak and his Speech contemptible.* So weak in their Judgment are some People, as to withhold, or withdraw deserved Esteem and Affection from those, who through any such like unavoidable Infirmary of the Flesh preach the Gospel unto them.

But, the greatest Infirmary of the Flesh, which the Apostle here hath Reference to, was his *Affliction*, the Persecution he suffered in preaching the Gospel. This he often calleth by that Name. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. 'Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my Infirmities, that the Power of CHRIST may rest upon me. Therefore I take Pleasure in Infirmities, in Reproaches, in Necessities, in Persecutions, in Distresses for CHRIST'S Sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong.' He speaks in that Chapter of a *Thorn in the Flesh*, sharp Persecution; which the Answer of GOD to his Prayer that it might depart from him, stiles *Weakness*. Ver. 7, 9.

Infirmary of the Flesh, the Apostle in our Text calleth his *Temptation* which was in his *Flesh*. It was a Trial of his Faith and Fidelity, and of People's sincere Regard for him. At the first, the *Galatians* despised not, nor rejected it, nor him for it; but afterwards they became prejudic'd against him, on Account of it: That Persecution especially, which he suffered from the Tongues of
of

of *false Teachers*, had this bad Effect upon them. There were such then as preached CHRIST of *Envy* and *Contention*, supposing to add Affliction to *St. Paul's Bonds*; endeavouring to vex and grieve his Spirit, to lessen his Reputation and Interest among the People, and discourage him in his Work. He speaks of them in the Verse after my Text; *They zealously affect you, but not well: they would exclude you.*— You from the Liberty and Privileges of the Gospel, as well as me from the Dignity of Apostleship—*that ye might affect them—them only.*

The *Afflictions* of Ministers, which are their *Temptations* in their Flesh, Poverty, Sickness and Weakness of Body, some corporal Deficiency or Deformity, Contempt and Persecution from the Men of the World; and above all, *Réproaches* from false Brethren, ill Usage among their *Mother's Children*, that are causelessly angry with them, too often cool the warm Affections of their People towards them, and alienate their Minds from them.

Most unjustly are Ministers despised, and rejected, because such *Infirmity of the Flesh* attends them in preaching the Gospel. The more worthy are they of Respect and Love on that Account: That such Discouragement does not hinder their engaging and continuing in a Work of so great Difficulty and Danger. They give clearer Proof of their Love to Souls, and discover greater Fortitude of Spirit, by preaching the Gospel through *Infirmity of the Flesh*. It argues, to a Judgment of Charity, the Strength of Grace in their Souls, overcoming this *Temptation* which is in their Flesh. *Acts* xx. 24. 'Bonds and Afflictions abide me. But none of those Things move me, neither count I my Life dear unto my self, so that I might finish my Course with Joy, and the Ministry which I have received of the LORD JESUS, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of GOD.'

2. Ministers are sometimes look'd upon by People as their Enemies, for telling them the *Truth*. *Am I therefore become your Enemy, because I tell you the Truth?* Paul's declaring the Truth of GOD so fully and plainly to the *Galatians*, made them count him their Enemy. He preached the true and only Gospel of CHRIST unto them. *I certify you, Brethren, saith he, Chap. i. Ver. 11. That the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after Man, for I neither received of Man, neither was I taught it, but by the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST.* So assured was he of the Divinity of his Doctrine, that he there denounces a terrible *Anathema* against Man or Angel, that should preach the contrary. *Though we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any Man preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed.* Awful Words indeed! to make every Preacher take heed to his Doctrine.

The Truth which Paul hath special Reference to in the Text, is that of Christians Freedom from the Servitude of the *Mosaic Yoke*, the Bondage of the Ceremonial Law. He thoroughly understood, and boldly asserted the *Christian Liberty*: And this was improv'd against him, as a popular Prejudice, among the Jewish Converts to Christianity. Many of them were still wedded to their old religious Service, and retain'd a fond Opinion of the Excellence and Unalterableness of the ritual Institution. So bewitch'd were the foolish *Galatians*, as to be enamour'd with Bondage; so unreasonable, as to count him their Enemy, who was their Advocate for Liberty.

It is the great and indispensable Duty of Ministers, to tell People the *Truth*. They are appointed by CHRIST to teach it. This is the Work, to which they are set apart. And for the due Performance of which, they must

must have the *Knowledge of the Truth*; need be better acquainted with it, than those unto whom they are to tell it. The *Law of Truth* should be in their Mouth; and they always speak forth the *Words of Truth*. GOD's Word is the Truth, which they are solemnly charged to preach. 2 Tim. iv. 2. *Preach the Word*—the Gospel, the Word of Truth; that People may be taught as the Truth is in JESUS; rather than as it is in the Writings of any Men, how renowned soever for Orthodoxy, or admired for Learning. CHRIST is the Truth, which Ministers are to preach—the true Scripture-Doctrine concerning his *Person*, and *Offices*, constituted and designed by infinite Wisdom and Goodness for the Relief and Salvation of fallen, miserable Men. In Consequence of which gracious Dispensation, and to their being Partakers of the Benefit, Ministers are to tell People the Necessity and Nature of *Regeneration*, which is *Truth in the inward Parts*; and of *evangelical Obedience*,—the Way of Truth, which must be known, and walked in by all, that through Grace would arrive to a happy and glorious Estate in Heaven.

Ministers are to tell People the whole Truth; though in rightly dividing the Word of Truth, they should insist most on those Parts of it, which are of greatest Moment or Concern to the Honour of GOD, and Interest of Souls—have the directest Influence on Men's Practice in this World, and their Happiness in that which is to come.

Ministers should tell People the Truth *plainly*; that by Manifestation of it, they may commend themselves to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of GOD. They should speak *boldly* in asserting and defending the Truth, and reproving of Sin, which is opposite to it. Jer. xxiii. 28. *He that bath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully; what is the Chaff to the Wheat, saith the LORD?*

Ministers

Ministers are bound to tell People the Truth, in their public Discourses, and private Applications to them, and by exemplary Walking before them in the Truth. The Discharge of their whole Office consists in their telling People the Truth, in the various Ways which they are requir'd to do it, on Pain of being look'd upon, and dealt with by GOD, as the falsest of Men.

But, for their Faithfulness therein, People sometimes account and treat them as their Enemies. So did the *Jews* CHRIST. Joh. viii. 40. *Now ye seek to kill me, a Man that hath told you the Truth, which I have heard of GOD.* And so persecuted they all the Prophets, and Apostles: And the best Ministers, in all Ages of the Church, have been for this, in some Degree or other, hated and rejected. The Minds of proud and carnal Men are shut up, and barred with various Appetites, Humours, and Passions, against the Truth, so that they do not admit it. They receive not the Love of the Truth, and therefore esteem not them in Love, for their Work's Sake, who tell it them. The Truth which they cannot readily swallow, nor easily digest, occasions four Prejudices in them against the Dispensers of it. If a Preacher by the Light of heavenly Truth, detects and reproves a wicked Man, he is provoked to say unto him as *Abah* to *Elijah*, *Hast thou found me, O mine Enemy?* † If he delivers any Thing contrary to the prejudicate Notions of a good Man, he also is apt to be offended, and to reject him as an Heretick.

3. Ministers may be wanting in their *affectionate Regards* for the People, and this may lessen the People's for them. Would to GOD! that none had ever in this Way, given greater Cause of Dissatisfaction, than the blessed Apostle *Paul*, whom the foolish *Galatians* deem'd their Enemy, because he told them the Truth. As

† 1 Kings xxi. 20.

Faithfulness, so Failure, in the ministerial Work (that eminent Office of Love,) may sometimes occasion the Estrangement of Affections from them that are employ'd in it.

There are none more despicable Creatures on Earth, more worthy to be rejected of GOD, and all the People, than Men of corrupt Minds, and destitute of the Truth, and of Love to CHRIST and Souls, thrusting themselves, by some Means or other, into the sacred Office; and, under Pretence of extraordinary Zeal and Charity, so exercising it for a while, as to captivate the Affections of an injudicious Multitude, and betray them into Error, Sin, and Ruin. *Isai. ix. 15. The Prophet that teacheth Lies, he is the Tail. Hof. 4. 6. Because thou hast rejected Knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me. Mal. ii. 8. 9. Ye are departed out of the Way, ye have caused many to stumble at the Law: ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of Hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the People, according as ye have not kept my Ways, but have been partial in the Law.* GOD hath his Time to discover false Teachers, and put them to Shame and Confusion. 'Of this Sort (says the *Apostle*) are they which creep into Houses, and lead captive silly Women, laden with Sins, led away with diverse Lusts: ever learning, and never able to come to the Knowledge of the Truth. Now as *Jannes* and *Jambres* withstood *Moses*, so do these also resist the Truth: Men of corrupt Minds, Reprobates concerning the Faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their Folly shall be manifest unto all Men, as theirs also was. †'

But even such as are true Friends to CHRIST and Souls, and who from a Principle of sincere and fervent Love, undertake to feed his Sheep and Lambs, their Affections

† 2 Tim. iii. 6, &c.

may be warmest toward their People, at their first coming amongst them. Through Infirmary of the Flesh they may afterwards grow more dull in their Work, remiss in their Care to please all Men for their Profit ; and through Temptation fail more in the Performance of their Duty. Unto the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus* CHRIST said, *I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love.* Rev. ii. 4. And as ministerial Zeal abateth, the People's Love is apt to wax cold, when indeed the Fervour of it is most needed, and should be used to re-inflame that Zeal. Col. iv. 17. *Say to Archippus, take heed to the Ministry, which thou hast received in the LORD, that thou fulfil it.* ' It is good (saith the *Apostle* in the Context) to be zealously affected *always* in a good Thing.' It is good for a Minister to be so in the Execution of his Office to the End ; that so he be not, in any Measure, the faulty Cause of their becoming coldly, or evil-affected towards him.

4. Through natural *Inconstancy* of their Minds, People are subject to this Change of them, respecting their Ministers. Scarce any Thing is more mutable than the human Mind ; nor any Particular, in which the Inconstancy of it is oftner discover'd, than in People's Regard for their Ministers ; one Day, extolling ; and the next, decrying of them, of which sometimes no other so just Account can be given, as the natural Fickleness of Man ; who is unstable as Water : a restless Sort of Creature, that is given to Change. He is so in his Comforts : the very Delights of Nature by Continuance, grow tedious and burdensome to him ; and Pleasures need to be soon relieved and refreshed by other Pleasures. He is very changeable in his Religion : One while shewing great Forwardness to embrace the Truth, and the Preachers of it ; and anon falling away from it, and them ; without any Reason of such Defection. Gal. v. 7. *Ye did run well, who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the Truth ?* Joh. v. 35. *He was a burning and shining Light : and*

ye were willing for a Season to rejoice in his Light. Exceedingly pleased were the People with *John* the Baptist, when he began his Ministry among them. The Word expressing this, signifies, that they leaped for Joy—danced about him, as Children about a Bon-fire. But, like Children, they were not long pleased with him : rejoiced in his Light only for a Season—for an Hour. He did burn and shine, in his Doctrine and Life, with equal Zeal and Lustre ; but they cooled in their Affections toward him, and soon lost their Esteem for one that was greater than a Prophet.

5. To the Want of due Care in *placing* the Affections on Ministers, may frequently be owing the sudden Alienation thereof from them. An Error in the first Step, betrays People into their After-misconduct and Misery, in Respect of their Ministers. As when they are rash and inconsiderate in the Choice of them. Affections that run before the Understanding, and are not guided by Judgment, are vagrant, and never well settled. If People's Esteem for Ministers, be not founded in the most solid and substantial Qualifications of such ; if it be raised on no firmer Ground, than some little Accomplishments, external Embellishments, and those superficial Ornaments, which set off a Preacher, and with which weak Minds are apt to be much taken at first, it is not likely to continue. Affections which are excited, and drawn forth by those Things which commend Ministers to the Fancies, more than to the Consciences of People, generally soon vanish and expire. The closest and strongest Attachment, is by the sacred Ties of Conscience. People should esteem Ministers highly in Love, for their *Work's Sake*, and the Glory that may thence redound to GOD, and the Good which may accrue to their own Souls. If blind and perverse Selfishness, or Party-Zeal, lead in the Choice of Ministers, People ordinarily soon fall into some Ditch, out of which it is hard to recover. If their Affections are actuated by sinister Views, and they

they have Men's Persons in Admiration, because of Advantage; for the accomplishing some revengeful, or covetous, or ambitious Project, they change with the Wind, and vary as the Contingencies of secular Affairs. Lust, Passion, Humour, Interest, are Things very versatile and uncertain. Whence they that are govern'd by them, must needs be double-minded Men, and unstable in all their Ways. A carnal Spring may send forth a great Flow, a high Tide, of Affections toward Ministers; but there is wont to follow as low an Ebb. *Stony Ground Hearers* are usually affected to the Preachers, as they are to the Word it self: they hear them, and anon with Joy receive them; yet have they not Root in themselves, but are well-pleased for a while only; for when any Thing ariseth a little crossing their Humour or Interest, by and by they are offended. *Mat. xiii. 20, 21.*

6. The *Malice* and *Hand* of *Satan* may be industriously employed in alienating the Hearts of People from their Ministers. That it was so in the Case of the *Galatians*, with Respect to *St. Paul*, may be clearly intimated by his speaking of them as a *bewitched* People. Chap. iii. ver. 1. *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the Truth?*— And so count me your *Enemy* for telling it you? Heretical Teachers, which seduced them, were a Sort of spiritual Sorcerers, assisted by the Devil, in casting such Mists before the Eyes of their Minds, that they were led away with the Error of the Wicked, and fell from their own Stedfastness. The Devil may have considerable, though an invisible, Hand, in the Operations of all the forementioned Causes, in the malignant Influence of all the Occasions, whereby People are alienated from their Ministers.

Paul's Thorn in the Flesh, the chief Infirmity of it, through which he preached the Gospel, was the *Messenger of Satan* buffetting him, 2 Cor. xii. 7. Fitly doth he so call it, though it might not be an *evil Angel* immediately

mediately troubling and vexing him, as *Chrysostom* suppos'd, but a cruel Persecutor, whom the Devil stirred up against him.

All the *Briars* and *Thorns*, that are with faithful Ministers, and the *Scorpions*, among whom they sometimes dwell, are *Messengers of Satan*, design'd and improv'd by him, for their Affliction and Hurt; but permitted and over-ruled by GOD, for their Humiliation and Good.

By the Spirit that worketh in the Children of Disobedience, they are sometimes filled with Wrath, with Envy, and Indignation, with Madness and Contradiction, against those who tell them the Truth.

The *Father of Lies*, by high Pretences to Truth, when he is transformed into an Angel of Light, stirreth up bitter Zeal against the faithful Preachers of it: And by setting one Part of GOD's Truth in Opposition to another, doth cause Men to reject it, and them that maintain the Consistence, and are set for the Defence, of the whole.

The Tempter is subtil and active to hinder Ministers in their Work, that, failing therein by Infirmary, by Negligence, or Pravity, they may incur the Censure of good People, and bring their Office, as well as Persons, into Contempt among the Profane. The *great red Dragon's Tail drew a third Part of the Stars of Heaven, and did cast them to the Earth.* Rev. xii. 4. Many are the base Arts, Instruments, and Means, which the Devil useth to hinder the Shining and Influence of the spiritual Stars, in the Firmament of the Church — to cause them to fall from their heavenly Profession into the Dirt of this World and an earthly Course of Life, which renders them vile and useless.

Such being the common Occasions and Causes of the Alienation of People's Affections from Ministers, that
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were at first very welcome and dear to them ; *Both* may receive *Instruction* therefrom.

1. Ministers may not reckon upon the long Continuance of People's warm Affections towards them. If at his first preaching the Gospel to a People, a Minister is not despised, nor rejected, for any Infirmary of the Flesh, if they receive him as an *Angel of GOD*, even as CHRIST JESUS ; and they would part with their Eyes, rather than with him : Yet this Blessedness may be short-liv'd, may very soon vanish, and he in their Mis-apprehension and Male-treatment of him, become their Enemy. Let him not therefore, as a *Novice*, be lifted up with Pride, when he sits highest in the Estimation of People, and is entertained with their loudest Applauses. There may be a sudden Change of their Disposition and Behaviour towards him. And if so, though it will be grievous unto him, to see his People, from whom he should have Comfort, decline in their Regards for him, and grow into a Weariness and Dislike of him ; yet, let him not think strange concerning this Trial of his Fidelity to CHRIST and Love for them, as if some strange Thing had happened to him. This is a Temptation common unto Ministers. " It has been an old Practice among Professors, not to like their Pastors long."

2. Ministers should take heed to themselves, that they do not, by their own Default, loose the People's Affections. It is unworthy the Character— it is below the Spirit of Gospel-Ministers, to please all Men, but for their Profit. They study to approve themselves unto GOD ; and at the same Time, to secure their Interest in the Affections of People, *Not* (as Paul saith to the *Philippians*, Chap. iv. ver. 17.) *because they desire a Gift ; but desire Fruit that may abound to their Account.* And since People are so apt to take Offence, Ministers need be the more careful that they give none. 2 Cor. vi. 3. *Giving no Offence in any Thing, that the Ministry be not blamed.*

blamed. That no Man despise them, how prudent, as well as faithful, ought they to be, in their whole Conduct?

And such of them as for a good End seek to maintain their own Credit among the People, will not go about to weaken the Reputation of others, their Fellow-Labourers; will be as far from insinuating any Thing to their Disadvantage in the Ministry, as from doing any Thing to their own—Be far from depreciating, and running down others, that they may advance and magnify themselves—far from endeavouring to exclude others, that they may ingratiate themselves, and possess all the Room in the Hearts of People. For they are desirous of others' Usefulness and Success in the Ministry, as well as of their own. If the Glory of GOD, and the Churches Good be not the End of Ministers, they are not Christians; and may not this End be attained by our Brethren's Gifts, as well as by our's? Should one Workman malign another, that helpeth him to do his Master's Work? Alas! that ever there should be such a Thing as *Envy*, among Fellow-Workers to the Kingdom of GOD! Any Strife between the Servants of the humble JESUS, which of them should be greatest in the Opinion of Men, and any Endeavours, if not open and notorious, yet sly and plausible, to disgrace, and supplant one another! Cautelously tender should they all be of their own, and each other's Interest in the good Esteem and Affections of People.

Yet

3. Ministers must tell People the *Truth*, although they should count, and call them their Enemies therefor. Wo to them that sell the Truth of GOD at so low a Price, as the Favour of Men! 'Do I now (says the Apostle to the *Galatians*, Chap. i. ver. 10.) persuade Men, or GOD? or do I seek to please Men? For if I yet pleased Men, I should not be the Servant of CHRIST.'—i. e. If I so far pleased them, as not to tell them the Truth; but accommodated my Preaching to their false Notions,
corrupt

corrupt Humours, and favourite Lusts. If Ministers to gain, or keep, the Affections of People, that cannot endure *sound Doctrine*, speak not *the Things that become it*; if they handle the Word of GOD deceitfully, sophisticating and adulterating of it, and so tempering it to the vitious Palates of Men; they are really their Enemies, Betrayers, and Murderers of Souls. They cannot be pure from the Blood of all Men, if, to avoid their Displeasure, they shun to declare unto them all the Counsel of GOD. And had we not rather our People should account us their Enemies, for telling them the Truth; than we be found such, for concealing it from them? What is the Clamour of their Tongues against us in this World, to the Cry of their Blood for ever in the next? O, let us not, to prevent their Murmurings, or to obtain their Commendations now, expose our selves to their sore Complaints, fierce Accusations, and desperate Curses hereafter. Can we imagine damned Angels will be more uncomfortable Associates in Misery, than poor wretched Souls, misled by us into the same Place of Torments? O that there never in this Land, may be Occasion and Ground for that Complaint, in Jer. v. 30, 31. *A wonderful and horrible Thing is committed in the Land. The Prophets prophesy falsely, and the Priests bear Rule by their Means, and my People love to have it so. And what will ye do in the End thereof?*

Faithful Ministers and Friends to Souls, notwithstanding all that they have suffered, and been shamefully in-treated, as ye know, will be *bold* in GOD, to speak unto People the Gospel of GOD with much Contention.

As Ministers should open their Mouth boldly, to make known the *Mystery* of the Gospel, so let them do it with *Wisdom*, in the fittest Time and Manner. The Truth may be deliver'd by them so unseasonably, so indigestedly, so incoherently, so improperly, as to prejudice the Minds of People against it.— As may “rather open
than

than stop the Mouths of Gainsayers, and sooner discredit the Truth, than convert the Adversary." CHRIST spake the Word unto the People, as they were able to hear it. *Mark* iv. 33. I have (said he to his Disciples) yet many Things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. *John* xvi. 12. Ministers are to teach according to People's Need and Ability to learn. It is better for them to stoop too low, than to soar too high :— to feed Men with *Milk*, than to choke Children with *strong Meat*. The Tongue of the Wise useth Knowledge aright.

But, if notwithstanding all the Fidelity and Prudence we can use, in telling People the Truth, they will treat us as Enemies therefor, yet must we persevere in our Duty ; and speak GOD's Word to them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear : and very gladly spend, and be spent for their Souls, though the more abundantly we love them, the less we be loved.

4. People should be admonished to watch their Hearts, and not let their Affections soon cool towards, and be alienated from their faithful Ministers : not to mistake them for their Enemies, who tell them *the Truth*.

Brethren, We whose Office it is to do so, warn you thus, not for that we would have Dominion over your Faith, but would be Helpers of your Joy. All that we preach unto you, we would have you compare with the Standard of Truth. Search the Scriptures daily, whether those Things we tell you are so. If they agree not with the written Oracles of GOD, don't believe them, because we say they are true ; nor do them, because we say they are good.

But if it be the Truth we tell you, in all the necessary and essential Articles of it ; count us not your Enemies, should we happen to oppose some By-Opinion, or false Way of yours. And do not despise, nor reject us, because we also are compassed with Infirmary. And

And thus much we say, not because we seek *your's*, but *you* : and your Estrangement from us, may hurt your selves, more than us. *Brethren* (saith the *Apostle*, in the Verse before my Text, to the *Galatians*, who were so alienated in their Affections from him) *I beseech you be as I am ; for I am as ye are : Ye have not injured me at all. i. e.* Not at all in Comparison of the Wrong ye have done your own Souls.—Count me not your Enemy—I am the same Friend to you, that ever I was ; my Love is not estranged, nor abated ; and I wish, for your Sakes, that ye were affected towards me, as I still am towards you. It was GOD's solemn Charge to his People of old, *Take heed unto thy self, that thou forsake not the Levite, as long as thou livest on the Earth.* Deut. xii. 19. Our LORD's Words to his Apostles mightily enforce this Caution, *Matth. xi. 40.* “ He that receiveth you, receiveth me ; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.” *Luke x. 16:* “ He that heareth you, heareth me ; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.” Were not the Honour of their divine Master, and the Welfare of immortal Souls, nearly concerned in the Reception which good Ministers of JESUS CHRIST meet with, they would not be very solicitous about it. They don't live upon the popular Air, the Opinion and Breath of Men : but upon the Credit they have with GOD,—the Approbation which their Persons and Performances find with him. It is, on their own Account, a very small Thing with them to be judged, — despised and rejected of Men. And they don't, for their own Sake, court the People's Affections, nor complain of the Alienation thereof, from them. Did no Dishonour redound to CHRIST, nor Damage to the Souls of Men, they could be content to be made the Filth of the World, and Off-scouring of all Things, as they too much have been from the Apostles to the present Days : At least, they would not so often, as they now find Occasion therefor, enter such a Caution as this ; which they do more out of Regard

gard to other's Safety, than to their own Reputation. 2 Cor. xiii. 6, 7, 8, 9. ' But I trust that ye shall know that we are not Reprobates. Now I pray to GOD, that ye do no Evil : not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as Reprobates. For we can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth. For we are glad when we are weak, and ye are strong : and this also we wish, even your Perfection.'

5. And finally, It is a *Blessedness* worthy of special Notice, and to be thankfully acknowledged, when People retain the warm Affections they had toward their faithful Ministers, at their first preaching the Gospel unto them. The Question in the Text may be ask'd, *Where is the Blessedness* you speak of? Alas! that so many Christian Societies in the Land must say, *it is not enjoy'd* among us. But, blessed be the GOD of Love and Peace, it is to be found in some of our Churches.— And we hope it will be in this, with which we have Communion in the solemn joyous *Transaction* of the present Day.

Honoured and Beloved Brethren,

It was not to introduce, or insinuate any Charge against you of inconstant Love to your late, who was your first Pastor, that you have been entertain'd with such a Discourse at this Time : for all must bear you Record, that if it had been possible, ye would have almost *plucked out your own Eyes*, rather than have parted with him : but to excite you to be like-minded toward him that is now to be set over you in the LORD.

Ye know that through *Infirmity of the Flesh*, which is common to all, he preacheth the Gospel unto you at the first. You appear before this great Assembly, to receive him as GOD's Messenger, CHURCH's Ambassador, sent to you. Never let him be counted your *Enemy*, because he telleth you the *Truth*. While he continues to do so,
let

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let him not, for any Temptation he may have in his Flesh, be despised, or rejected by you.

None (I trust) from among your selves, nor abroad, will, through Envy and Strife, think to add Affliction to his Infirmities, with which he will be constantly hamper'd in his ministerial Course. Yet, if this should happen to him, let him then have the Consolation of knowing your *fervent Mind* towards him; as *Paul* had in the *Corinthian Saints*, when his Flesh had no Rest, but he was troubled on every Side; without were *Fightings*, within were *Fears*. 2 Cor. vii. Stand with him always in the Cause of Truth. And for lesser Errors, and Sins of Infirmary, which he is subject to, and none are without, do not lightly forsake him. Have Compassion on him, as he will on you, if at any Time, *out of the Way*: and do not willingly expose and aggravate his Failings; nor yet idolize his Gifts, and so confide in him, as to embrace any false Doctrine, because he may preach it as the Truth. Tit. i. 14. *Not giving heed to the Commandments of Men, that turn from the Truth.* But while, in the Discharge of all Parts of his Office, he shall faithfully instruct and establish you in the Truth; esteem him very highly in Love for his Works Sake: Account of him as a Minister of CHRIST, and Steward of the Mysteries of GOD, and your Soul's very good Friend. Believe and obey the Truth he telleth you: And let him have the Joy, (than which he can have no greater) to see you and your Children, walking in Truth.—And now,

Dear Sir,

I turn my self to you, in a Brotherly Address.—*Lo this, we have searched it, so it is*, that People's warmest Affections toward their Ministers, are apt soon to cool, and be alienated from them; *bear it, and know thou it for thy Good.*

You come this Day unto, and must be with this People, in *Weakness, and in Fear, and much Trembling.* It must needs

needs affect your thoughtful Mind with the greatest Concern, respecting your Acceptance, and Usefulness, in the Work of the Ministry, to know how through *Infirmity of the Flesh* you are to preach the Gospel; and what Occasion this, through the Levity and Corruption in Men, and subtil Malice of Satan, may prove of your Contempt, and Rejection, and so of the Hindrance of the Gospel, and consequently of the Hurt and Ruin of Souls, the Loss of your own, as well as of others.

The just Apprehension of this amazing Danger, will make you study to shew your self approved unto GOD, a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth: And to labour by Manifestation of the Truth, to commend your self to every Man's Conscience, in the Sight of GOD; that if any, who now receive you as an Angel of GOD, even as CHRIST JESUS, should ever count you their Enemy, it may be for no other Reason, but because you tell them the Truth. In this is comprized your whole Duty; and in doing it faithfully, you will have Comfort, and shall be *glorious in the Eyes of the LORD*, whatever be the Event, as to your being despised, or esteemed; rejected, or well-accepted of Men.

See to it, that the Truth of CHRIST be in you:—that you have an intimate, experimental, saving Knowledge of it: Lest by any Means, when you have preached it to others, you your self should be a *Cast-away*. Diligently consult the infallible Oracles of Truth: Pray for the Spirit of Truth, to lead you into all Truth: And guard against the Spirit of Error.—And the more so, because of some special *Temptation* which hath hapned to you, at your first preaching the Gospel. Not only real, but meerly suspected Mistakes in us, should be wisely improv'd to greater Circumspection in the Study of Truth; “which is as a Vein of Silver, encompassed with Earth, and mixed with Dross.” In disputable Mat-

ters, it is not many Times easy, upon little Search, to discover on which Side the Truth lies : And a stiff Adherence to either, would (you are sensible) ill become a young Minister : And worse still, (which hath seem'd to have been the Case of some) an eager espousing and maintaining of the Wrong, out of a Spirit of Opposition and Revenge. 'Tis a foolish gratifying the Jealousies of others concerning him, for a Man to depart from the Faith, that he may be at a greater Distance from them : and to verge toward Scepticism, that he may appear the more free from Bigotry. Though your Temper doth not (so far as I have Knowledge of it) incline, or expose you *particularly* to such a Mis-step, yet may you have Occasion to watch, and pray, that you enter not into *Temptation*.

I have been pleas'd, Sir, in frequent Conversation with you, to observe your Thirst after Knowledge, and inquisitive Disposition to find Truth—to prove all Things, that you might hold fast that which is good. And you will not be offended at this friendly, cautionary Advice ; Not to lean to your own Understanding ; nor defer too great a Regard to the Judgment of any other Men, alike fallible with those, you may possibly see Reason to dissent from.—Not to be overtaken with the first Appearances of Truth : nor too peremptory in abstruse and intricate Points : nor hastily reject any as false and absurd, because they are infolded in Mysteries, entangled with Objections, and perplexed with snarling Debates.

Take heed to your Ministry, that you fulfil it, in telling People the Truth—pure, unadulterated, evangelic Truth. Propose it to them in its native Plainness and Simplicity. If in your impartial, humble Enquiries after Truth, you should seem to find any Thing which hath not been commonly taught and known, tell it in such fit Season and Manner, as that it may be received, without Detriment to other, and perhaps more necessary Parts
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of divine Truth. 'Men do not (saith our SAVIOUR, giving a Reason why he did not impose something on his Disciples, which many judg'd to be their present and important Duty) Men do not (says he) put new Wine into old Bottles : else the Bottles break, and the Wine runneth out, and the Bottles perish.' Mat. 9. 17. GOD hath laid different Strefs on Things in his Word ; and so should Ministers in teaching of them : Though they must not shun to declare any Part of his Counsel, or give up the least Point of Christian Verity, on any worldly Consideration.

Be valiant for the Truth against all Opposition from the Lusts of Men, and Powers of Darknes. Though through Infirmitie of the Flesh you preach the Gospel, yet may the *Power of CHRIST* rest upon you, and the Arms of your Hands be made strong, by the Hands of the mighty GOD of *Jacob* : So that from the Blood of the uncircumcised Slain, from the Fat of the Mighty, the Bow of *Jonathan* turn not back empty !

If, for your Faithfulness in telling People the Truth, any of them should count you their Enemy, and be ready to pluck out your Eyes ; yet, being affectionately desirous of them, you must be willing to impart unto them, not the Gospel of GOD only, but also your own Soul, because they are dear unto you. Thus may you win them to the Love and Practice of the Truth : And have them for your Glory, and Crown of Rejoicing in the Presence of our LORD JESUS CHRIST at his Coming.

And GOD of his infinite Mercy grant, that we all may be united in the Truth :— That our *Hearts may be comforted, being knit together in Love, and unto all the Riches of the full Assurance of Understanding, to the Acknowledgment of the Mystery of GOD, and of the Father, and of CHRIST.* That we may receive one another, as *CHRIST also received us to the Glory of GOD.*— That
Ministers

Ministers may receive one another, as Fellow-Helpers to the Truth: And People thankfully receive, and stedfastly adhere to the Pastors and Teachers, which our glorious ascended Saviour hath given; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of CHRIST: 'Till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of GOD, unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of CHRIST: That we henceforth be no more Children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Sleight of Men, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: But speaking the Truth in Love, may grow up into him in all Things, which is the Head, even CHRIST: From whom the whole Body fitly joined together; and compacted by that which every Joint supplieth, according to the effectual Working in the Measure of every Part, maketh Increase of the Body, unto the edifying of it self in Love!

A M E N.



The CHARGE given to Mr. *Mayhew*
by his Father, the Rev. Mr. *Experience*
Mayhew of *Martha's Vineyard*.

WHEREAS you, on whom we have imposed our Hands, are called unto the Work of the Evangelical Ministry in the Church of the Living GOD, and unto the Office of a *Pastor* in this Church of CHRIST with whom we are now assembled; and have accepted this Call;

We do (being thereunto called) separate you unto this Work, and introduce you into this sacred Office. And we charge you before the great GOD, and our glorified REDEEMER, the only Head of the Church, that you take heed unto the Ministry which you thus receive of the LORD; and watchfully fulfil it, as expecting shortly to give him an Account of your Stewardship. And that you do accordingly feed the Flock of GOD, over which the HOLY GHOST has made you Overseer, therein studying to shew your self approved unto GOD, a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, and giving unto every one his Portion in due Season.

Unto this End we charge you to give your self to Reading, Meditation and Prayer: And that you preach the Word of GOD, being instant therein, in Season and out of Season, reproving, rebuking and exhorting with all Long-suffering and Doctrine: And that you take heed to your self and your Doctrine, that in so doing you may save both your self and them that hear you.

We charge you also duly to administer the Sacraments of the New Covenant unto proper Subjects: And that you impartially exercise the Discipline with which the House of GOD ought to be governed, making a Difference betwixt the Holy and the Profane; and that you perform this, and all the other Parts of your Office, with
such

The CHARGE.

such Discretion and Gravity, that no Man may have Occasion to despise your Youth.

We also charge you to be an Example unto the Believers, in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Faith and in Purity.

And that we may omit nothing belonging to your Charge, we, in the Name of our great LORD and MASTER, exhort and require you to make the Word of GOD your Rule in the whole of your Ministry, as that which is able throughly to furnish you unto every good Work. And we advise you in particular to study the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, which were written on Purpose to direct Ministers in their Work.

And let it be your Endeavour in all your Administrations to exhibit and exemplify the Graces of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, unto whose special Service you are now devoted.

And now, in his Name, we declare unto you, that if you keep this Charge, the LORD of Hosts will give you a Place among his elect and holy Angels, who are Witnesses of this Solemnity, and of the Vows of GOD which you have now taken upon you.— Yea, we testify and declare unto you, that if you do these Things, when our LORD appears, you shall also appear with him in Glory. (And blessed is that Servant whom his LORD, when he cometh, shall find so doing.) You shall then receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away.

And now, *Jonathan* my Son, know thou the GOD of thy Fathers, and serve him with a perfect Heart, and with a willing Mind; for the LORD knoweth all Hearts, and understandeth the Imaginations of the Thoughts — If you seek him, he will be found of you; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you, and cast you off for ever. —

The RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP given
to Mr. *Mayhew*, by the Rev. Mr. *Benjamin Prescot* of *Salem*.

WE have now beheld a fresh Instance of the Grace, Care and Faithfulness of JESUS CHRIST, the LORD of the Harvest, in sending forth Labourers into his Harvest.

We are Witnesses of the regular Call this Person now introduced as a Labourer in CHRIST's Vineyard, has received, and of his Acceptance thereof, with an humble and becoming Profession of his Dependance upon CHRIST the glorious Head of Influences, for that Wisdom, Grace and Strength that may at all Times be sufficient for him.

Yea, hereupon we have seen him ordain'd, separated, or set apart, to the Work of the Gospel-Ministry, by Prayer and the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery; and heard the solemn Charges laid upon him to be faithful in the Discharge of the Duties of that sacred Office.

The only remaining Part, then, of the present Solemnity, is the Expression of those Acknowledgments which have been wont to be made by the Presbytery to those whom their common LORD and Master from Time to Time joins to them in the Services of his Kingdom.

And this Part, assigned to me (tho' most unworthy) by the venerable Council convened, on the present happy Occasion, I shall endeavour to perform in very few Words.

And in the first Place, Rev. and Dear Sir, We with Satisfaction acknowledge, those ministerial Gifts and Graces, with which it has pleased CHRIST, in whom all Fulness dwells, to bless you; and openly declare our
Em

The Right Hand of Fellowship.

We acknowledge and assert the Regularity of your Call, and Induction into the Gospel-Ministry, and the Validity of your Ordination to that Office ; and thereupon we with Gratitude and Joy accept you into our Number, and esteem you as an *Elder*, a *Pastor* or *Bishop* in the Church of CHRIST, and our Equal in Point of Office.

Further, As by your Accession to us, we promise our selves Comfort and Strengthening in the great Work we are jointly engag'd in, so we now profess our Readiness, according to our Power, to afford you all that Help, by our Prayers and Advice, which your Circumstances may require.

And in Testimony of all this, We now, agreeable to the known Usage in these Churches, give you, Rev. and Dear Brother, the Right Hand of our Fellowship. —

And may it please GOD, to accept the Dedication you have made of your self to him and his Service. May the Presence of CHRIST be ever with you, and his Grace sufficient for you. May you be a Scribe instructed to the Kingdom of Heaven, able and ready to bring forth out of your Treasures Things new and old. May you be an Ensamble to the Flock, and in Doctrine shew Uncorruptness, Gravity, Sincerity, sound Speech which cannot be condemned. And may you so come to this dear Flock, over which the HOLY GHOST hath made you an Overseer, with the Fulness of the Blessing of the Gospel of CHRIST. May the Pleasure of the LORD ever prosper in your Hands, and may you have many Seals of your Ministry, many who shall be your Satisfaction and Comfort here, and your Joy and Crown in the Day of the LORD JESUS. AMEN and AMEN.

